

R 112130Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY BELMOPAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1717
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELMOPAN 000092

DEPT FOR WHA/CEN, DS/IP/RD/WHA, DS/TIA/ITA, DS/OSAC
EL SALVADOR FOR LEGATT
GUATEMALA FOR ICE

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [PINR](#) [HO](#) [BH](#)
SUBJECT: GRENADE ATTACK AT THE RESIDENCE OF BELIZE'S
COMPTROLLER OF CUSTOMS

REF: BELMOPAN 082

Classified By: RSO Robert F. Kelty for reason 1.5(d)

SUBJECT: Grenade Attack at the Residence of Belize,s
Comptroller of Customs

¶1. (U) On Tuesday, March 3, 2009, the residence of Gregory Gibson, Belize,s Comptroller of Customs, was targeted by unknown assailant(s) who threw a grenade onto the third floor balcony. Comptroller Gibson currently resides at #2 Signa Street, Belama, Phase 1, Belize City. The incident occurred at approximately 8:15 pm (local time) and the grenade was likely thrown from an empty lot behind the building. Comptroller Gibson, his wife and his daughter were all at home at the time of the attack. There were no injuries to any individuals in the attack.

¶2. (U) A Belize Police Department (BPD) investigation has not generated any additional information or arrests in the attack. The Belize Defense Force,s (BDF) explosive ordinance detection team discovered the fly-off lever of the grenade in a tree in an adjacent lot. The grenade caused superficial damage to the building and left a hole approximately one foot in diameter on the balcony landing.

¶3. (C) RSO,s Foreign Service National Investigator (FSNI) interviewed Comptroller Gibson after the attack. Comptroller Gibson advised that he believes the attack was an intimidation attempt as a result of recent criminal charges and ongoing court proceedings against suspected drug dealers and corrupt customs officers. The Customs Department has recently investigated several contraband importations, to include an illegal shipment of weapons and a shipment of medicine containing pseudoephedrine. The FSNI also interviewed a locally engaged staff employee, who resides next door to Comptroller Gibson and was home at the time of the incident. The LES employee confirmed that she heard the explosion and advised that the windows of her home rattled after the explosion. As she was inside the home at the time of the incident, she did not observe the assailant(s) involved in the attack.

¶4. (C) Per REFTEL, the BPD has seized small quantities of explosives in country on multiple occasions over the past year. The explosives and related material, which included two blocks of M112 explosives (1.25 pounds), two tubes of PE 4 (British equivalent of C-4), various detonators, safety fuses and grenades, all appear to be linked to the British Army Training Support Unit (BATSUB), stationed at the BDF Price Barracks in Belize City. The items were either stolen and/or sold by two alleged BATSUB personnel previously stationed in Belize. There are approximately twenty (20) hand grenades still unaccounted for and remain missing. RSO is still awaiting confirmation on whether the device used in this most recent attack was part of the original BATSUB lot still unaccounted.

DIFFILY